under construction, Tarapur Atomic Power Project-4 (TAPP-4) (540 Mwe) has been connected to the grid on 4.6.2005, which is scheduled to commence commercial operation by August 2005. The work on remaining reactors is progressing as per schedule.

Agreement with Russia

340. SHRI RAMA MUNI REDDY SIRIGIREDDY:
SHRI K. RAMA MOHANA RAO:

Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether India is getting any assistance from Russia to its nuclear energy programme;

(b) the details of reactor that Russia is going to supply to India;

(c) whether any agreement has been signed between India and Russia on this during recent Presidents visit to Russia; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE PRIME MINISTER'S OFFICE (SHRI PRITHVIRAJ CHAVAN:) (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) Two nuclear reactors of 1000 MWe each are presently under construction at Kudankulam Atomic Power Project in Tamil Nadu with technical co-operation with Russian Federation.

(c) No, Sir.

(d) Not applicable.

Allotment of captive coal mines to power projects

341. SHRI. R. KAMARAJ: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government have decided to allot captive coal mines to power projects;

(b) if so, the details thereof and the number of captive coal mines so fare allotted to power projects;

(c) whether Government are also considering to introduce coal sector reforms; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COAL (DR. DASARI NARAYANA RAO): (a) and (b) As per the existing policy of the Central Government, coal blocks are allocated for captive mining for power generation, iron and steel production and cement production. In pursuance of the above policy 38 coal blocks have been allocated/decided for allocation to various companies in the private sector and public sector for captive mining for power generation.

(c) and (d) The Central Government has introduced a Bill, namely the Coal Mines (Nationalisation) Amendment Bill, 2000, in Rajya Sabha on 24.04.2000 which seeks to allow commercial mining of coal and lignite to an Indian company and to engage in exploration of coal and lignite. An Expert Committee has been set up to draw up a road map for coal sector in the country.

Improving the quality of coal

342. SHRIMATI PREMA CARIAPPA: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that bulk of coal produced through open cast mining is of very low quality;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor; and

(c) the steps taken in this regard to improve the quality of coal by Coal India Ltd.?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COAL (DR. DASARI NARAYANA RAO): (a) and (b) The quality of extractable coal reserve in our country amenable for open cast mining is in general of lower quality containing more than 34% ash. As such the bulk of quantity of coal produced from open cast mines in the country is of inferior quality.

(c) Following steps have been undertaken by Coal India Limited to ensure supply of quality coal:—

(i) Beneficiation of the coal produced by CIL through coal washeries.